

Research Article

Conflict Management Strategies and Growth Performance of Agro Allied Firms in North Central Nigeria

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Abstract

This study examined conflict management strategies and growth performance of agro- allied firms in North Central, Nigeria. *The study specifically sought to assess the effect of accommodation in interpersonal conflict, and collaboration in conflict within a group on employee productivity, and organizational growth performance respectively; and also, determine the effect of compromise in conflict between group, and competition in conflict between rival firms on organizational survival, and organizational competitiveness respectively.* The study employed the descriptive survey research design. The population comprised two hundred and seven employees of the ten purposely selected agro-allied firms in North-Central, Nigeria. Primary data were obtained from structured questionnaire and thus, secondary data were obtained from books, journals and internet. Ordinal logistic regression was applied to test the hypotheses. *Findings revealed that accommodation in interpersonal conflict and collaboration in conflict within a group had positive effects on employee productivity and organizational growth performance respectively. Also, compromise in conflict between groups and competition in conflict between rival firms had positive effects on organizational survival and organizational competitiveness respectively.* It was concluded that accommodation, collaboration, compromise and competition are key strategies used in managing personal and organizational conflicts. The study proposed that agro-allied firms and other firms need to invest in conflict management training programmes for employees at all levels to acquire the necessary skills and knowledge in conflict management. Additionally, the development and implementation of formal conflict resolution mechanisms need to be prioritized to address conflicts efficiently and effectively in organisations.

Keywords

Conflict, Conflict Management, Productivity, Growth Performance, Competitiveness

1. Introduction

Conflict is inevitable among humans especially when there is an interaction between two or more individuals, groups, or

organizations; which is largely caused by differences in individual perception, goal, interest, ideas, feelings, values, be-

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lief, attitudes and needs Ezigbo, C. A. [16]. Conflict is a reality of social and business life that exists at different societal levels Rigual, C., Prugl, E. and Kunz, R. [35]. Conflict refers to a psychological state of mind which commonly occurs in every organization. Conflicts are inevitable parts of organizational life which are the outcome of behavioural differences of different stakeholders such as managers, employees, parents, children, etc. Rooney, E. [36]. Conflict situations do always appear in daily, private and public life Ezigbo, C. A. [17]. It is seen as an unpleasant fact in any organization where people compete for jobs, resources, power, recognition and security Briggs, A. C. [10]. Conflict is defined as a dispute that occurs when individuals' or groups' interests, goals or values are incompatible with each other Dibua, J. J. [15]. Conflict is generally perceived as negative and it is used synonymously with such term as irrationality, destruction and violence, to reinforce its negative connotation Adomi, E. E. and Anie, S. O; Kertzer, J. D. [2, 24]. Fook, C. Y. and Abdulhusain, A. H.. posit that conflict could be positive when it clarifies a point of view, promotes creativity, and develops human capability in the organization. However, conflict can be negative when it establishes turmoil and resistance to change, foster distrust and build a feeling of defeat [19].

People tend to perceive conflict as negative and do not easily look at it from a positive angle. Conflict can be functional or dysfunctional Ryan, S. R. [37]. Functional conflicts promote creativity, resolves issues to maintain a healthy workplace in organisations. Thus, dysfunctional conflicts have negative effects on the employees, psychologically and emotionally, and thus lead to low productivity Zhongjun, Y., Liu, H., Gu, J. and Yang, J. [43]. Conflict management involves the intervention designed to minimise dysfunctional conflicts and increase functional conflicts in the organization. It is a process whereby managers plan, design and implement policies and procedure to ensure that conflicts are resolved effectively Khan, M. and Mughal, R. M. [25]. The objectives of this study are:

- i. To assess the effect of accommodation in interpersonal conflict on employee productivity.
- ii. To ascertain the effect of collaboration in conflict within a group on organizational growth performance.
- iii. To determine the effect of compromise in conflict between groups on organizational survival.
- iv. To assess the effect of competition in conflict between rival firms on organizational competitiveness.

2. Literature Review

2.1. Conceptual Review

2.1.1. Conflict Management Defined

Conflict management is the process of diagnosing the nature and scope of conflict by understanding the actual or po-

tential conflict, and apply suitable methodology to neutralise the emotional energy involved and thus have the disputed parties understand and resolve their differences in the workplace environment Hocker, J. L., Berry, K. and Wilmot, w. w.; Agbaeze, K. E. and Ebirim, O. C. [21, 3].

Thus, conflict management involves conflict resolution strategies by developing means of ending a state of conflict. Conflict resolution implies reduction, termination or elimination of all forms of conflict. In practice, the process of resolving conflict tends to involve bargaining, negotiation, mediation, and arbitration Shanheryar, M. [39].

Conflict management reduces the negative outcomes of conflicts and thus promotes the positive outcomes with the aim of achieving organizational goals Rahim, A. [34].

Conflict management involves the intervention designed to minimise dysfunctional conflicts and increase functional conflicts in the organization. It is a process whereby managers plan, design and implement policies and procedure to ensure that conflicts are resolved effectively Khan, M. and Mughal, R. M. [25].

2.1.2. Accommodation in Interpersonal Conflict and Employee Productivity

Accommodation in interpersonal conflict is a cooperative conflict-handling style where one party allows another party's wishes or concerns in expense of the party's concern so as to resolve the conflict Thomas, K. W. and Kilmann, R. H. [40].

Positive relationships can be maintained by accommodating others which prevent animosity or tension and thus positively influencing employee morale Wall, J. A. and Callister, R. R. [42].

However, employees that always accommodate others might be taken to be weak or lacking assertiveness, thus their credibility and leadership effectiveness become doubtful De Dreu, C. K. and Van Vianen [14]. Thus, using accommodation excessively without addressing pertinent issues may stifle innovative thinking and creative problem-solving, as accommodating parties may avoid proposing novel ideas so as to maintain harmony Wall, J. A. and Callister, R. R. [42]. Accommodation in interpersonal conflict and employee productivity is contingent on the individual characteristics of the employees involved and the nature of the conflict. As accommodation facilitates conflict resolution and develop relationships, using it excessively without addressing pertinent issues may have negative effects on employee productivity.

H₁ Accommodation in interpersonal conflict has positive effect on employee productivity.

2.1.3. Collaboration in Conflict Within a Group and Organizational Growth Performance

Collaboration in conflict within a group is the cooperative approach which a group takes to address and resolve conflicts Tjosvold, D. and Sun, H. F. [41]. It involves a willingness to

work together, to find mutually beneficial solutions. Collaboration in conflict within a group and organizational growth performance is relevant in institutions of learning and field of organizational behavior and management.

Collaboration in conflict resolution promotes learning and knowledge sharing within the organization. Group members share their knowledge and thus, improve their skills and competencies Amason, A. C [6]. Collaboration in conflict within a group stresses open communication and feedback, and it promotes an innovative and adaptable organizational culture, capable of responding to market changes and growth opportunities Tjosvold, D. and Sun, H. F. [41].

Collaboration in conflict within a group has positive effect on organizational growth performance as it fosters effective problem-solving, team cohesion, knowledge sharing, employee engagement, innovation, and adaptive decision-making Amason, A. C [6]. When organizations prioritize collaborative conflict resolution approach they are more likely to experience sustained growth and success.

H₂ Collaboration in conflict within a group has positive effect on organizational growth performance.

2.1.4. Compromise in Conflict Between Groups and Organizational Survival

Compromise in conflict between groups is the resolution of disagreements by mutual concessions and finding neutral ground to reach a settlement Agbo, M. U. [4]. Compromise is essential conflict resolution.

strategy in intergroup conflicts, where the parties involved have conflicting interests and goals Almost, J., Wolff, A. C., Stewart-Pyne, A., McCormick, L. G., Strachan, D. and D' Souza, C. [5]. Compromise in conflict between groups has significant implications for organizational survival. Prompt resolving of conflicts is necessary for maintaining organizational stability and survival Rahim, M. A. [33].

Prolonged conflicts between groups can have negative effect on the organizations' reputation, both internally and externally Rahim, M. A. [33]. Compromise demonstrates maturity and professionalism in handling conflicts, which enhances the organization's image and survival Shabani, G., Behluli, A. and Oerimi, F. [38].

However, it is crucial to note that compromise may not always lead to best solution or fully address underlying issues Chan, J. C. Y., Sit, E, N. M. and Lau, W. M. [11]. It is necessary to strike a balance between compromise in resolving conflicts and maintaining the organization's long-term interests.

H₃ Compromise in conflict between groups has positive effect on organizational survival.

2.1.5. Competition in Conflict Between Rival Firms and Organizational Competitiveness

Competition in conflict between rival firms refers to the confrontations and competitive pressures that arise when

competing companies vie for customers, resources, market share, and competitive advantage Michael, O. C., Anthony, E. O., Eze, A. C., Chinwe, C. and Ikechukwu, N. [30]. Rival firms do always engage in various forms of conflict to gain a competitive edge over one another Michael, O. C., Anthony, E. O., Eze, A. C., Chinwe, C. and Ikechukwu, N [30]. Competition in conflict between rival firms does enhance organizational competitiveness for success and sustainability of businesses Kilduff, G. J., Galinsky, A. D., Gallo, E. and Reade, J. J. [27].

Previous studies have shown that competition in conflict between rival firms can tune organizational competitiveness. Porter, M. E. posits that competition leads firms to improve their products, services, and processes. To stay competitive, firms need to invest in research and development which leads to higher-quality offerings and improved performance [32]. [8] stresses that competition results to adaptable changes in market conditions. Agile firms can respond quickly to market shifts and opportunities and thus, gaining a competitive advantage. Competition in conflict between rival firms compels firms to focus on meeting customer needs and preferences. Customer-centric strategies enhance customer satisfaction and loyalty and thus derive long-term competitiveness Porter, M. E. [32]. Grant, R. M. stresses that competitive firms attract and retain top talent by offering competitive career growth opportunities, compensation, and a positive work environment. Motivated and skilled employees certainly, contribute to organizational competitiveness [20]. However, excessive and unhealthy competition can have negative implications on organizational competitiveness Medlin, C. J. and Ellegaard, C. [29]. Aggressive tactics and price wars can reduce profitability and erode market value. Thus, a focus on particular rivals may divert attention from customers' needs and long-term strategic goals into fruitless efforts.

H₄ Competition in conflict between rival firms has positive effect on organizational competitiveness.

2.2. Theoretical Framework

Dual Concern Model

The Dual Concern Model, was proposed by Dean Pruitt and Peter J. Carnevale in 1993. This is a theoretical framework that explains and analyzes how individuals approach conflict and make decisions about conflict management strategies. The model focuses on two primary dimensions: assertiveness (the degree to which an individual pursues his own interests) and cooperativeness (the degree to which an individual considers the interests of others). Dual Concern Model states that individuals can adopt different conflict-handling styles based on their level of assertiveness and cooperativeness. The model identifies five primary conflict management styles which include:

Accommodation: this combines low assertiveness and high cooperativeness. Individuals prioritize maintaining harmonious relationships and meeting the needs of others. They

willingly yield to the interests of others and make concessions to resolve the conflict.

Collaboration: this combines high assertiveness and high cooperativeness. Individuals seek to find mutually beneficial solutions and strive for win-win outcomes. They actively engage in open communication, share information, and work together to address the underlying interests of the parties involved.

Compromising: this involves moderate assertiveness and moderate cooperativeness. Individuals aim to find middle ground by making concessions and trade-offs. They seek to reach a satisfactory solution that partially satisfies the interests of the parties involved.

Competition: this involves high assertiveness and low cooperativeness. Individuals prioritize their own interests and goals above those of others. They strive to win the conflict and may use aggressive tactics to achieve their objectives.

Avoidance: this style shows low assertiveness and low cooperativeness. Individuals choose to evade or postpone addressing the conflict. They may avoid confrontation, withdraw from the situation, or remain silent about their concerns.

The Dual Concern Model provides a valuable framework for understanding how individuals approach conflicts and make decisions about conflict management strategies. By considering assertiveness and cooperativeness, organizations can assess and analyze their employees' conflict management styles, as well as the overall dynamics of conflicts within the organization.

2.3. Previous Studies

Aremu, N. S., & Adeyemi, A. E. examined conflict management and sustainability of manufacturing firms in Nigeria [7]. The specific objective of the study was to assess the effect of conflict management approaches on economic sustainability. The study adopted the cross sectional survey design and data were collected through structured questionnaire. Random sampling technique was used to select fifty (50) managers from five (5) purposely selected manufacturing firms in Kwara State, Nigeria. Multiple regression analytical technique was employed to test the hypotheses. Findings revealed that communication and negotiation conflict resolution approaches positively affected economic sustainability while third party intervention had a negative influence on economic sustainability. Therefore, the study recommended that manufacturing firms need to adopt open communication and negotiation to address conflicts within manufacturing firms.

Adilo, J. N. examined conflict management and organizational performance of breweries in South East, Nigeria [1]. The specific objective was to determine the effect of conflict management strategies (negotiation, collective bargaining, joint consultation, and alternative dispute resolution) on organizational performance. The survey research design was adopted and data were obtained from primary and secondary sources. A total of five brewery companies were used. Re-

gression analysis was employed to test the hypotheses. Finding revealed that conflict management strategies (negotiation, collective bargaining, joint consultation, and alternative dispute resolution) had significant positive effects on organizational performance. The study concluded that conflict management strategies are used to neutralize conflict and improve organizational performance.

Ezigbo, C. A. examined Justification for managing organisational conflicts in Nigerian public sector organizations [16]. The specific objectives were to identify some key sources of conflict in the workplace, ascertain how to resolve conflict between groups and assess how to manage conflict between a boss and a subordinate. The study adopted the descriptive survey research design. Findings revealed that scarcity of resources, different attitudes, poor communication and lack of team work are key sources of conflict in the workplace. Conflict between groups can be resolved by collective bargaining, negotiation, mediation and arbitration and also, conflict between a boss and a subordinate can be managed by collaboration and accommodation. The study concluded that conflict prompts modification of policies and operation procedures in the organization.

3. Methodology

The study utilized the descriptive survey research design. The target population was two hundred and seven (207) agro-based firm owners, managers, supervisors and foremen from ten purposely selected agro-allied firms in North Central, Nigeria which comprises of Benue, Kogi, Kwara, Nasarawa, Niger and Plateau states. The agro-allied firms were selected because they have operated for more than ten years. This study adopted the census sampling method and the population was used as the sample. The questionnaire was designed on five point likert scale format. Out of the two hundred and seven (207) copies of the questionnaire distributed, 170 copies representing 82.3% were returned while 37 copies representing 17.7% were not returned. To confirm the face validity of the instrument, it was given to five experts in the academia and industry. Reliability of the instrument was conducted through test-retest and was tested with Chronbach Alpha which gave the reliability coefficient of 0.70 indicating high degree of items consistency. The hypotheses were tested with ordinal logistic regression with the aid of the SPSS version 25.

4. Data Analyses

Table 1 contains responses to the options on accommodation in interpersonal conflict. The first item indicates that there was proper settlement of issues between two persons ($\mu = 3.23$, S.D = 0.93). The second item indicates that offences are timely settled between two persons ($\mu = 3.52$, S.D= 1.02). The third item reveals that offenders always apologise to the person that was offended ($\mu = 3.62$, S.D= 0.98). The fourth

item indicates the ability to adopt 'give and take' to resolve issues ($\mu = 3.75$, S.D = 1.0). The fifth item indicates the ability

to settle issues when there is disagreement ($\mu = 3.45$, S.D = 1.08). The grand mean 3.519 is high.

Table 1. Responses on Accommodation in Interpersonal Conflict.

S/N	Options	N Stat.	Min. Stat.	Max. Stat.	Mean Stat.	Std. Dev. Stat.
1	There is proper settlement of issues between two persons	170	1.00	5.00	3.235	.93767
2	Offences are timely settled between two persons	170	1.00	5.00	3.524	1.02745
3	The offender always apologises to the person that was offended	170	1.00	5.00	3.629	.98405
4	We adopt a "give and take" to resolve issues	170	1.00	5.00	3.753	1.00773
5	When I disagree with someone, I always try to settle the issue	170	1.00	5.00	3.453	1.08819
	Grand Mean				3.519	
	Valid N	170				

Source: Field Survey, 2025.

Table 2. Responses on Avoidance in Interpersonal Conflict.

S/N	Options	N Statistic	Minimum Statistic	Maximum Statistic	Mean Statistic	Std. Deviation Statistic
1	I try to avoid doing anything that will offend anyone in my organization	170	1	5	3.0765	1.04345
2	I try to skip open confrontation with anybody	170	1	5	2.9647	1.1404
3	I do not count offences on anybody	170	1	5	3.2	1.07472
4	I try to make free and fair speeches	170	1	5	3.0588	1.10783
5	I am willing to make changes to avoid quarrels with my colleagues	170	1	5	3.5706	1.10847
	Grand Mean				3.174	
	Valid N	170				

Source: Field Survey, 2025.

Table 2 shows the responses to the options on avoidance in interpersonal conflict. The first item indicates the individual's ability to try to avoid doing anything that will offend anyone in his organization ($\mu = 3.07$, S.D = 1.04). The second item indicates the ability of the respondents to try to skip open confrontation with anybody ($\mu = 2.96$, S.D= 1.14). The third item reveals that the respondents do not count offence on

anybody ($\mu = 3.2$, S.D= 1.07). The fourth item indicates the respondents' efforts in making free and fair speeches ($\mu = 3.05$, S.D = 1.1). The fifth item reveals the respondents' willingness to make changes to avoid quarrels with their colleagues ($\mu = 3.57$, S.D = 1.1). The grand mean 3.174 is moderate.

Table 3. Responses on Collaboration in Conflict within a Group.

S/N	Options	N Stat.	Min. Stat.	Max. Stat.	Mean Stat.	Std. Dev. Stat.
1	I listen and act upon the wishes of my colleagues	170	1.00	5.00	3.1118	1.05156
2	I try to satisfy the expectations of others in the organization	170	1.00	5.00	3.1588	1.00505
3	I try to investigate issues with my colleagues to find a solution acceptable to all	170	1.00	5.00	2.8059	.96260
4	We adopt a “give and take” approach to resolve issues in the organization	170	1.00	5.00	2.8294	.92963
5	When I disagree with someone, I try to settle the issue with that person	170	1.00	5.00	2.8941	.96106
	Grand Mean				2.96	
	Valid N	170				

Source: Field Survey, 2025.

Table 3 contains responses to the options on collaboration in conflict within a group. The first item indicates the respondents' ability to listen and act upon the wishes of his colleagues ($\mu = 3.11$, $S.D = 1.05$). The second item reveals that the respondents try to satisfy the expectations of others in the organization ($\mu = 3.15$, $S.D = 1.0$). The third item indicates the ability to investigate issues with colleagues to find a so-

lution acceptable to all ($\mu = 2.80$, $S.D = 0.96$). The fourth item reveals the ability to adopt a “give and take” approach to resolve issues in the organisation ($\mu = 2.82$, $S.D = 0.92$). The fifth item indicates that when there is disagreement, the respondents will try to settle the issue with the person ($\mu = 2.89$, $S.D = 0.96$). The grand mean 2.96 is considered moderate.

Table 4. Responses on Compromise in Conflict between Groups.

S/N	Options	N Stat.	Min. Stat.	Max. Stat.	Mean Stat.	Std. Dev. Stat.
1	Our group is willing to give up some of its demands to reach an agreement with the other group.	170	1.00	5.00	3.0615	1.03143
2	We believe it is important to find a solution that satisfies both our group's and the other group's needs.	170	1.00	5.00	2.9244	1.13021
3	We are open to modify our position to accommodate the other group's concerns.	170	1.00	5.00	3.1320	1.05252
4	We are willing to make concessions to prevent the conflict from escalating.	170	1.00	5.00	3.0458	1.12353
5	We believe that both groups can benefit from finding a mutually agreeable solution.	170	1.00	5.00	3.5403	1.10541
	Grand Mean				3.1408	
	Valid N	170				

Source: Field Survey, 2025.

Table 4 contains responses to the options on compromise in conflict between groups. The first item reveals that the respondents were willing to give up some of their demands to reach an agreement with the other group ($\mu = 3.06$, $S.D = 1.03$). The second item indicates that the respondents believe that it is important to find a solution that satisfies both their group's and the other group's needs ($\mu = 2.92$, $S.D = 1.13$). The

third item indicates that the respondents are open to modify their position to accommodate the other group's concerns ($\mu = 3.13$, $S.D = 1.05$). The fourth item reveals that the respondents are willing to make concessions to prevent the conflict from escalating ($\mu = 3.04$, $S.D = 1.12$). The fifth item indicates that the respondents believe that both groups can benefit from finding a mutually agreeable solution ($\mu = 3.54$, $S.D = 1.1$).

The grand mean 3.1408 is moderate.

Table 5. Responses on Employee Productivity.

S/N	Options	N	Min.	Max.	Mean	Std. Dev.
1	I effectively manage workload and prioritizes tasks to meet objectives.	170	1.00	5.00	2.7529	.87579
2	I work collaboratively with team members to achieve shared goals.	170	1.00	5.00	2.8000	.98869
3	I complete assigned tasks accurately and within deadlines	170	1.00	5.00	2.5882	.93320
4	I continuously seek opportunities for improvement in task performance	170	1.00	5.00	3.4118	1.00642
5	I take initiative to identify and solve problems related to assigned tasks	170	1.00	5.00	2.8882	1.16882
	Grand Mean				2.888	
	Valid N	170				

Source: Field Survey, 2025.

Table 5 indicates the responses to the options on employee productivity. The first item shows the respondents' ability to effectively manage workload and prioritize tasks to meet objectives ($\mu = 2.75$, $S.D = 0.87$). The second item indicates the ability to work collaboratively with team members to achieve shared goals ($\mu = 2.80$, $S.D = 0.98$). The third item reveals the ability to complete assigned tasks accurately and

within deadlines ($\mu = 2.58$, $S.D = 0.93$). The fourth item reveals the ability to continuously seek opportunities for improvement in task performance ($\mu = 3.41$, $S.D = 1.0$). The fifth item shows the ability to take initiative to identify and solve problems related to assigned tasks ($\mu = 2.88$, $S.D = 1.16$). The grand mean 2.888 is moderate.

Table 6. Responses on Organizational Growth Performance.

S/N	Options	N	Min.	Max.	Mean	Std. Dev.
		Stat.	Stat.	Stat.	Stat.	Stat.
1	Our firm's market growth is well above the industry average	170	1.00	5.00	3.7294	.89559
2	We have maintained a steady asset growth	170	1.00	5.00	2.7412	.94403
3	Our employment growth rate has risen this year	170	1.00	5.00	2.7176	1.03331
4	In the last five years, sales have increased better than that of our competitors	170	1.00	5.00	3.2647	1.05776
5	The number of customers has increased in the last five years	170	1.00	5.00	2.7000	.95366
	Grand Mean				3.031	
	Valid N	170				

Source: Field Survey, 2025.

Table 6 indicates the responses to the options on organizational growth performance. The first item reveals that the firms' market growth is well above the industry average ($\mu = 3.72$, $S.D = 0.89$). The second item indicates that the firms had maintained a steady asset growth ($\mu = 2.74$, $S.D = 0.94$). The third item reveals that the employment growth rate of the

firms has risen ($\mu = 2.71$, $S.D = 1.03$). The fourth item indicates that the last five years, sales have increased better than that of their competitors ($\mu = 3.26$, $S.D = 1.05$). The fifth item reveals that the number of customers has increased in the last five years ($\mu = 2.70$, $S.D = 0.95$). The grand mean 3.031 is moderate.

Table 7. Responses on Organizational Survival.

S/N	Options	N Stat.	Min. Stat.	Max. Stat.	Mean Stat.	Std. Dev. Stat.
1	Our firm adjusts continuously to different levels of environmental uncertainty	170	1.00	5.00	3.0647	1.14687
2	Our firm embraces change in order to gain competitive advantage	170	1.00	5.00	3.6471	1.09009
3	We frequently introduce new products/services as demand changes	170	1.00	5.00	3.5412	1.05531
4	Our firm frequently modifies our products/services based on customers feedback	170	1.00	5.00	3.0882	1.13491
5	Our firm frequently adopts new technologies for competitive advantage	170	1.00	5.00	2.5235	1.11048
	Grand Mean				3.173	
	Valid N	170				

Source: Field Survey, 2025.

Table 7 indicates the responses to the options on organizational survival. The first item reveals that the firms adjust continuously to different levels of environmental uncertainty ($\mu = 3.06$, S.D = 1.14). The second item indicates that the firms embrace change in order to gain competitive advantage ($\mu = 3.64$, S.D= 1.09). The third item indicates that the firms frequently introduce new products/services as demand

changes ($\mu = 3.54$, S.D= 1.05). The fourth item reveals that the firms frequently modify her products/services based on customers feedback ($\mu = 3.08$, S.D = 1.13). The fifth item indicates that the firms frequently adopt new technologies for competitive advantage ($\mu = 2.52$, S.D = 1.11). The grand mean 3.173 is moderate.

Table 8. Responses on Organizational Competitiveness.

S/N	Options	N Stat.	Min. Stat.	Max. Stat.	Mean Stat.	Std. Dev. Stat.
1	Our firm's products and services are difficult to mimic	170	1.00	5.00	3.0118	1.09322
2	Our firm's products and services are applicable in multiple situations	170	1.00	5.00	3.0529	1.15262
3	Our firm's products and services are unique	170	1.00	5.00	2.7059	1.06946
4	Our firm's products and services are sustainable	170	1.00	5.00	3.1706	1.15142
5	Our firm's products and services are superior	170	1.00	5.00	3.0176	.99391
	Grand Mean				2.992	
	Valid N	170				

Source: Field Survey, 2025.

Table 8 indicates the responses to the options on organizational competitiveness. The first item indicates that the firms' products and services are difficult to mimic ($\mu = 3.01$, S.D = 1.09). The second item reveals that the firms' products and services are applicable in multiple situations ($\mu = 3.05$, S.D= 1.15). The third item reveals that the firms' products and services are unique ($\mu = 2.70$, S.D= 1.06). The fourth item indicates that the firms' products and services are sustainable ($\mu = 3.17$, S.D = 1.15). The fifth item reveals that the firms'

products and services are superior ($\mu = 3.01$, S.D = 0.99). The grand mean 2.992 is moderate.

Test of Hypotheses

Hypothesis One

H₁: Accommodation in interpersonal conflict has positive effect on employee productivity.

H₀: Accommodation in interpersonal conflict does not have positive effect on employee productivity.

Table 9. Parameter Estimates.

		Estimate	Std. Error	Wald	df	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval	
							Lower Bound	Upper Bound
Threshold	[EP]	45.143	21.12	62.344	1	.000	45.143	46.394
Location	[AIC]	59.329	18.21	67.123	1	.000	59.329	64.899

Link function: Logit.

Source: SPSS Output, 2025

The result reveals that accommodation in interpersonal conflict positively affects employee productivity. With an increase in the probability of employee productivity at an odds ratio of 59.329 (95% CI, 59.329 to 64.899), Wald $\chi^2(1) = 67.123$, $p = 0.000 < 0.05$. Therefore, the alternate hypothesis which states that accommodation in interpersonal conflict has positive effect on employee productivity is hereby accepted

and the null hypothesis rejected.

Hypothesis Two

H₂: Collaboration in conflict within a group has positive effect on organizational growth performance.

H₀: Collaboration in conflict within a group does not have positive effect on organizational growth performance.

Table 10. Parameter Estimates.

							95% Confidence Interval	
		Estimate	Std. Error	Wald	Df	Sig.	Lower Bound	Upper Bound
Threshold	[OGP]	42.148	11.32	56.136	1	.000	42.148	43.959
Location	[CCG]	53.554	14.28	63.774	1	.001	53.554	55.885

Link function: Logit.

Source: SPSS Output, 2025.

The result reveals that collaboration in conflict within a group positively affects organizational growth performance. With an increase in the probability of organizational growth performance at an odds ratio of 53.554 (95% CI, 53.554 to 55.885), Wald $\chi^2(1) = 63.774$, $p = 0.001 < 0.05$. Therefore, the alternate hypothesis which states that collaboration in conflict within a group has positive effect on organizational growth

performance is hereby accepted and the null hypothesis rejected.

Hypothesis Three

H₃: Compromise in conflict between groups has positive effect on organizational survival.

H₀: Compromise in conflict between groups does not have positive effect on organizational survival.

Table 11. Parameter Estimates.

		Estimate	Std. Error	Wald	df	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval	
							Lower Bound	Upper Bound
Threshold	[OS]	37.144	1.474	34.195	1	.000	37.144	49.164
Location	[CCiG]	49.949	.085	35.668	1	.002	49.949	51.346

Link function: Logit.

Source: SPSS Output, 2025.

The result reveals that compromise in conflict between groups positively affects organizational survival. With an increase in the probability of organizational survival at an odds ratio of 49.949 (95% CI, 49.949 to 51.346), Wald $\chi^2(1) = 35.668$, $p = 0.002 < 0.05$. Therefore, the alternate hypothesis which states that compromise in conflict between groups has positive effect on organizational survival is hereby accepted

and the null hypothesis rejected.

Hypothesis Four

H4 Competition in conflict between rival firms has positive effect on organizational competitiveness.

H₀: Competition in conflict between rival firms does not have positive effect on organizational competitiveness.

Table 12. Parameter Estimates.

		Estimate	Std. Error	Wald	df	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval	
							Lower Bound	Upper Bound
Threshold	[OC]	56.145	4.120	35.286	1	.000	56.145	58.524
Location	[CCRF]	64.227	2.185	61.361	1	.001	64.227	67.447

Link function: Logit.

Source: SPSS Output, 2025.

The result reveals that competition in conflict between rival firms positively affects organizational competitiveness. With an increase in the probability of organizational competitiveness at an odds ratio of 64.227 (95% CI, 64.227 to 67.447), Wald $\chi^2(1) = 61.361$, $p = 0.001 < 0.05$. Therefore, the alternate hypothesis which states that competition in conflict between rival firms has positive effect on organizational competitiveness is hereby accepted and the null hypothesis rejected.

5. Discussion of Results

Hypothesis one was tested with ordinal logistic regression to ascertain the effect of accommodation in interpersonal conflict on employee productivity. The finding revealed that accommodation in interpersonal conflict had positive effect on employee productivity ($\beta = 59.329$, $p = 0.000 < 0.05$). Chan, B. and Azam, A. established that workplace interpersonal conflict significantly affects employee job performance [26]. Positive relationships can be maintained by accommodating others which prevents animosity or tension and thus positively influencing employee morale Wall, J. A. and Callister, R. R. [42].

Hypothesis two was tested with ordinal logistic regression to assess the effect of Collaboration in conflict within a group on organizational growth performance. The finding revealed that Collaboration in conflict within a group had positive effect on organizational growth performance ($\beta = 53.554$, $p = 0.001 < 0.05$). Orhero, A. confirms that collaborative (integrative) conflict style is the most effective approach for maximizing individual and group outcomes [31]. Rahim, A. indicates the value of integrative conflict resolution strategy

which seeks win-win solutions, in fostering organizational learning and adaptation [34].

Hypothesis three was tested with ordinal logistic regression to assess the effect of compromise in conflict between groups on organizational survival. The result revealed that compromise in conflict between groups had positive effect on organizational survival ($\beta = 49.949$, $p = 0.000 < 0.05$). Orhero, A. Posits that organizations where groups navigate conflict through compromise – finding solutions that partially satisfy the needs of the parties involved tend to exhibit greater resilience and longevity compared to those plagued by intractable intergroup conflict [31]. Jehn, K. A. affirms that task related conflict is beneficial to the organisation since it allows the exchange of ideas and assists better performance amongst group members [22]. However, some researchers state that excessive compromise can lead to suboptimal solutions, decreased motivation, and a sense of dissatisfaction among stakeholders Korsgaard, M. and Sauer, W. [28]. DeDreu, C. K. W. and Weingart, R. L affirm that effectiveness of compromise can be contingent on factors such as the nature of the conflict, the power dynamics between groups, and the leadership's ability to facilitate a fair and balanced process [13].

Hypothesis four was tested with ordinal logistic regression to assess the effect of competition in conflict between rival firms on organizational competitiveness. The result revealed that competition in conflict between rival firms had positive effect on organizational competitiveness ($\beta = 64.227$, $p = 0.001 < 0.05$). Barney, J. B. and Hersterly, W. S. state that healthy competition that is focused on innovation, efficiency, and strategic differentiation, is a powerful catalyst for organizational growth [9]. Farida, L. and Setiawan, D. affirm that competitive conflict management strategy can be a driver for higher competitiveness [18].

However, it is crucial to acknowledge that not all forms of competition are equally beneficial. Contractor, F. J. and MacMillan, I. C. posit that destructive competition, characterized by unethical practices, sabotage, and predatory tactics, can ultimately harm both the competing firms and the broader market [12]. Therefore, competition in conflict between rival firms can significantly bolster organizational competitiveness which underscores the importance of striking a balance between healthy competition and destructive rivalry. It is also important to remain mindful of the potential pitfalls of unchecked competition and to tailor competitive strategies to the specific context and dynamics of each industry and market Henry, O. [23].

6. Conclusion

The study concludes that conflict management strategies such as accommodation, collaboration, compromise, and competition play significant role to improve different aspects of organizational performance. Effective conflict management not only boosts employee productivity and commitment but also enhances organizational growth and competitiveness. Accommodation in interpersonal conflict enhances employee productivity, as employees that adopt accommodating behaviors tend to achieve higher performance levels compared to those using less constructive approaches. Collaboration in conflict within a group fosters organizational growth, with teams that engage in open communication and shared problem-solving achieve stronger performance outcomes. Compromise in conflict between groups ensures organizational survival, indicating that firms where conflicting parties seek mutually acceptable solutions exhibit greater resilience and longevity. Competition in conflict between rival firms boosts organizational competitiveness, particularly in the agro-allied sector, where strategic rivalry leads to a stronger market advantage.

7. Recommendations

The study proffers these recommendations based on the findings:

- 1) The agro-allied firms and other firms need to encourage culture of accommodation in interpersonal conflicts, by promoting a supportive environment where team members prioritize relationship-building and mutual understanding.
- 2) The agro-allied firms and other firms need to create opportunities for team members to engage in joint problem-solving and decision-making processes. This can be facilitated through workshops and brainstorming sessions to help harness diverse perspectives and ensure a sense of shared ownership over outcomes.
- 3) The agro-allied firms and other firms need to encourage culture of compromise in conflicts between groups,

thereby, establishing clear communication channels and frameworks for negotiation that allow different departments or teams reach mutually acceptable solutions.

- 4) Management of agro-allied firms and other firms need to strategically manage competition in conflicts with rival firms to bolster their competitiveness. This can involve conducting market analyses to identify competitive advantages and areas for improvement.

Abbreviations

E.P.	Employee Productivity
A.I.C.	Accommodation in Interpersonal Conflict
O.G.P	Organisational Growth Performance
C.C.G.	Collaboration in Conflict within a Group
O.S.	Organisational Survival
C.C.G.	Compromise in Conflict between Groups
O.C.	Organisational Competitiveness
C.C.R.F.	Competition in Conflict between Rival Firms

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Author Contributions

Achi Ode Isaiah: original draft contribution, writing review of literature, methodology and fund acquisition.

Ezenwakwelu Charity: Conceptualisation, Draft authentication, methodology, validation, supervision and fund acquisition.

Egbosionu Nneka Anthonia: Validation and fund acquisition.

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Conflict of Interest

There was no conflict of interest in this study. Conflict of interest does not exist between the researchers and between the researchers and their institutions.

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